



# 2011 School Age News

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## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM

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**Facebook page**

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## Still going strong at 40!

In 1971, ACT (the acronym for Athletics, Creativity, Trips) began under the leadership of Shelda Taylor and Todd Bowen. Our leadership team under the direction of Jose V. Torres has continued their tradition and developed the program to meet the needs of today's families. (The acronym today stands for Adults and Children in Trust.) ACT's mission is to "provide children and their families with high quality services that sustain, support and

enhance their ability to thrive in diverse communities."

Through our seven core values of learning, organization, teamwork, safety, fun, diversity and child-centeredness we develop a training program for staff and a camp program that promotes growth for all involved.

We work to create home-like experiences that lead to long-lasting memories, new found friends and tolerance for new

adventures.

Communication among parents, staff and children has been a key ingredient to 40 year successful programming. Please share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns with the appropriate management team member listed on the left column or your child's counselor.

We train staff to connect with children and hope you hear of those connections. Please take a moment to review our welcome letter and have your spouse read it as well. All newsletters will be on our website.

## Welcome

After a fun filled summer here at A.C.T. we are very excited for the start of our After School Program! We work very hard to keep your children safe, engaged and entertained during the hours after school and we look forward to continuing, or if you are new to ACT, beginning a partnership with you. We would like you to make use of our website, brochures, newsletters, program and event flyers, daily postings and upcoming calendars to stay informed on current information and events at A.C.T. We promise however to do our part in making that information as accessible and up to date as

possible.

We encourage you to check out our information board in the main hallway as often as possible; we will be posting each group's weekly schedules as well as upcoming events and enrollment dates.

Please review this letter carefully. It includes pertinent information regarding our policies and procedures that have been put in place with your child's best interests in mind. We aim each year to meet parents' needs and requests and therefore there may be changes which affect your planning.

As always we encourage you to share any

questions or concerns you may have at any time. We want our partnership to be a two way street and we value your opinion regarding any aspect of our program. Our after school orientation is scheduled for October 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm and will be followed by a 6:15 "meet-the-staff" potluck dinner. I look forward to seeing many of you again, and meeting parents of our new comers. I hope you are all just as excited as we are and looking forward to a happy and successful after school year!

**END OF THE DAY**

The program day ends at 6:15 pm. A late fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes will be imposed beginning at 6:15 p.m. payable to the office.

Parents who are consistently late will be asked to make other arrangements for pick up.

**NO DOGS ALLOWED**

No dogs are allowed in the premises of ACT.

This includes the playground and the main entrance. Please refrain from bringing your lovable, kind pet to help pick up your child.

**SNEAKERS ARE A MUST!!**

Children are asked to wear or bring sneakers when they participate in the after school program. They will not be permitted to participate in gym or playground activities unless they wear sneakers.

Children who wear uniforms to school can bring a change of clothing in their bag. A.C.T. is not responsible for damage or loss of private property.

**Our Focus at the After School Program**

While you are busy getting ready for the new school year buying new pencils and backpacks we are just as busy getting ready for after school. Even though all of our staff have years of experience working at ACT we have a rigorous staff orientation planned filled with training and theme planning. We put a lot of emphasis on implementing A.C.T.'s seven core values: fun, learning, teamwork, diversity, child-centered, organization and safety.



We intend to take advantage of the warm weather by making regular visits to our garden which was started by our campers this summer. There are tomatoes, corn, herbs, and even earth worms that await children's curiosity. In October we plan to resume our Kids' Choice Day. Each staff member will choose a specific skill to focus and introduce to children. Children will be able to choose an activity of interests and will stick with it for a month of Fridays. This is a favorite

of the children and staff!



We are also excited to sit down with the children in a discussion of what activities interest them and what they would like to do for the upcoming months. The homework room will be available for children to work on their school work throughout the afternoon. This is an exciting time of new beginnings and I look forward to sharing our experiences with you regularly.

**PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The After School Program at ACT provides a safe haven where children can go after school and be engaged, entertained and safe. We understand that when children arrive they have been in school all day sitting still and following directions. Therefore we create an environment of choice where children are free to relax, do their homework, work on an art project, socialize, run around in the gym, play games and have a snack. We provide time for both structured and unstructured activities. Children are grouped by age and led by counselors who regularly hold meetings with them to discuss activities and projects that interest them. Counselors then incorporate the children's ideas in creating monthly theme plans. Group schedules are then posted on the information board in the main hallway for parents to review. Parent orientation is scheduled for Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30. We hope that you can plan to attend. This is an opportunity to ask questions as well as become familiar with the behind the scene planning of our program.

## WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

**Home or work telephone number changes...**Send a note or inform the office staff promptly.

**An emergency occurs...** it is essential to reach a parent immediately. Make sure your phone number and emergency contact phone numbers are on file and current. 911 will be called in the event of an emergency.

**Changes in the family situation or living arrangements occur...** inform staff. Such changes may affect a child's behavior. Knowing that changes have occurred will help counselors be effective and supportive with your youngster.

**Your child is absent from**

**school...**inform the A.C.T. office staff as after you call your child's school.

**Your child has contracted a contagious disease...** inform the A.C.T. office. Children recovering from a contagious disease must submit a doctor's note to the office before returning.

**Your child becomes ill during ASP...** parent will be called to arrange pick-up. Child will be isolated in a sick area until she/he is picked up.

**Someone else is picking up your child at the school...** arranged "play dates", etc., must have a note from parent on file at school at pick-up time, or 24-hour verbal notice from parent must be given to our office. If not, child



will automatically go to A.C.T. if no one is there to pickup the child.

**Your child is not at the pick up site 10 minutes after school dismissal...** the school administrators will be responsible for escorting your child to A.C.T.

**You can not arrive by 6:15 to pick up your child....**call the office so that we can inform your child.

## PICKING UP FROM SCHOOLS AND BUS STOPS

A.C.T. begins picking up from Cathedral School on Monday, September 13th and from public schools on Monday, September 20th. Thus far we are scheduled to pick up at Cathedral School and Central Park East 1-2. We will also pick up from P.S. 165 granted we have at least five children enrolled. Children from Central Park East 1-2 are dropped off by the school bus on the corner of 110th and Amsterdam Ave. Parents with children from other schools can arrange for them to be dropped off at this location between 3:30 and 4:00pm. Parents

may also have school vans drop children off at any time by the guard's booth.

You must call the office for a current update of escort service and to add your child to the school pickup list. To ensure the pick-ups from these schools go as safely as possible, we will need the cooperation of the parents and school personnel.

*Please note parents' responsibilities:*

**If your child is going to be absent because of illness,** call our main office as soon as possible to inform pick-up staff.

**If you arranged for your child to participate in another activity or "play date" for the afternoon, call us the day before, or leave a note on file at the school.** Your child will be escorted to A.C.T. without written or 24 hour verbal advance notice.

**If your child arrives late to pick-up area in his/her school building...** Staff will not wait for late comers. Inform your child and your child's teacher that we will leave 10 minutes after dismissal.

## SNACK

A.C.T. provides a buffet style snack which includes fruit, vegetables, crackers, soy butter and jelly, various treats and juice during program time. We try our best to work with children who follow specific diets or are allergic to certain foods, but we also encourage them to bring their own snack. Children who decide to bring snack to A.C.T. are asked not to bring candy, chips or soda. Please indicate on your child's medical form any allergies he or she has.

## EARLY CLOSING

For an additional fee on days when schools close early, A.C.T. will provide care for students who have registered in advance. A minimum of 10 children must enroll for A.C.T. to offer the early dismissal program at least one week prior t.

## HOLIDAY CAMP

For an additional fee, A.C.T. offers parents a Holiday Camp Program: an exciting alternative during school closings. Children may enroll for single or extended day programs. Parents must register in advance. Holiday Camp flyers will be posted on the information boards and on our web site.

**IT'S A DATE:**

- **Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>** Afterschool begins
  - **Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>** Cathedral Pick up begins
  - **Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>** Public Schools and bus pick up begins
  - **Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered.
  - **Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **Oct 13<sup>th</sup>** Parent Orientation and Family Potluck dinner
  - **Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered.
  - **Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>** Half-Day Program for public schools offered.
  - **Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>** Half-Day Program for private schools offered.
  - **Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>** ACT closed
  - **Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>** Camp Reunion & registration.
  - **Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>** Book Fair
  - **Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **Feb. 21-24<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **March 14<sup>th</sup>** Half-Day Program for public schools offered.
  - **March 19<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **April 6<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **April 9-13<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **May 28<sup>th</sup>** ACT closed
  - **June 7<sup>th</sup>** Holiday Camp offered
  - **June 12<sup>th</sup>** Annual picnic
  - **June 15<sup>th</sup>** Last Day of Afterschool
- All events are subject to change due to enrollment and circumstance out of our control.*

**HOMEWORK HELP**

Homework help is available in the Homework room beginning when the children arrive from school and ending at 5:30 pm. One intern or community service student is designated the homework helper. He/she monitors the children to ensure the environment is quiet and the children stay focused on tasks. He/she is also available to answer any questions the children may have as they work. We will keep parents, and sometimes teachers, informed of progress and of any difficulties. We will encourage

children to go to the homework room, but the choice is ultimately theirs whether or not they would like to use this time for homework. We also encourage children do work on their homework when the group is in their homebase. If your child is not attending homework help after your direction, please inform the counselor.

**USE OF CELL PHONE DEVICE**

While children are permitted to carry cell phones or communication device, the device must be in the OFF position during after school hours. Staff are asked to remain focused on children and children are asked to remain focused on their leaders. Realize that safety is our number one priority. If you need to contact your child or a staff member at any time you may call the front office and we will arrange for you to speak with them. **We will contact parents immediately in the event of an emergency or if your child is ill.**

**Holiday Camp—school closed? We are opened****Holiday Camp**

We offer programs when schools are closed and when classes dismiss early provided parents register one week in advance and we have an enrollment of 10 or more children. Same day registrations are not guaranteed.

We plan with children and families in mind. Children are grouped with others who are close to their age. We make every effort to keep friends together. We are currently accepting registration for September 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Space is limited.

October, and November activity plans will be available by Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Information about the activities for the months of December through June will be on our web page as early as November 2011. Families can register anytime for our Holiday Camps. We can not “hold a spot” without registration form and payment. Exceptions will not be made. I strongly recommend you review your child’s school calendar and plan ahead.

